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INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 VO-03 SCA-01 CIAE-00 FBIE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7520

S E C R E T BUENOS AIRES 6742

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CVIS, SHUM, PFOR, AR, US
SUBJECT: FRASER SUBCOMMITTEE WITNESSES

REF: (A) STATE 250024; (B) BUENOS AIRES 6490; (C) BUENOS AIRES 5298; (D) BUENOS AIRES 6373; (E) BUENOS AIRES 6396; (F) BUENOS AIRES 6611

1. WE BELIEVE THAT DEPARTMENT'S CONSULTATIONS WITH FRASER SUBCOMMITTEE CAN BE HELPFUL IN PRODUCING OBJECTIVE VIEW OF ARGENTINE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION. HOWEVER, TO HOLD A SECOND ROUND OF HEARINGS EXPRESSLY FOR WITNESSES "WHO SUPPORT GOA'S POSITION" (REFTEL A), AS WE SEE IT, MISSES THE POINT ALTOGETHER. WITNESSES SHOULD BE AS OBJECTIVE, CONSCIENTIOUS AND WELL-INFORMED AS POSSIBLE. A SESSION WITH BLATANTLY ANTI-GOA IDEOLOGUES CANNOT BE "BALANCED OUT" BY ANOTHER WITH PRO-GOA APOLOGISTS. THERE ARE MANY PERSONS DEEPLY CONCERNED WITH HUMAN RIGHTS IN ARGENTINA WHO ARE NOT OPENLY HOSTILE TO GOA. NOR, AS CONSERVATIVE BA HERALD COLUMNIST JAMES NEILSON POINTS OUT IN SUNDAY'S EDITION (OCTOBER 10), DO ALL CRITICS OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ACTION BELONG TO LEFT WING.

2. THERE ARE RESPONSIBLE AND REPUTABLE ARGENTINES WILLING TO TESTIFY ON THE ARGENTINE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION. JACOBO TIMERMAN, FOR ONE, A JEW, AND A COURAGEOUS AND CRITICAL NEWSPAPER PUBLISHER, HAS OFFERED PERSONALLY TO TESTIFY (REFTEL B). ANOTHER POSSIBILITY IS EMILIO MIGNONE, A PROMINENT EDUCATOR AND FORMER OAS OFFICIAL

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IN WASHINGTON FROM 1962-67. MIGNONE'S DAUGHTER WAS ABDUCTED IN MAY. HE IS CLOSELY CONNECTED TO THE CATHOLIC HIERARCHY IN ARGENTINA AND IS A MEMBER OF THE PERMANENT ASSEMBLY ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND YET CANNOT BE CONSIDERED EITHER A LEFTIST OR RIGHT-WING APOLOGIST. WELL-KNOWN COLUMNIST MARIANO GRONDONA COULD ALSO BE CONSIDERED. GRONDONA WAS KIDNAPPED BY THE TRIPLE A IN AUGUST (REFTEL C).

3. AS FOR GARZON MACEDA AND GUSTAVO ROCA, THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT, PRESS, OPPOSITION PARTIES AND GENERAL PUBLIC HAVE BEEN THOROUGH IN DENOUNCING THEIR BACKGROUND AND ACTIVITIES. IN ADDITION TO SRF INFORMATION, (REFTELS D AND E), EMBASSY ALSO HAS INFORMATION CONCERNING THEM FROM LOCAL PRESS REPORTS AND VARIOUS EMBASSY SOURCES. IN OUR JUDGMENT, WHICH IS BASED ON INFO FROM THE ABOVE, IT IS CLEAR THAT BOTH HAVE HAD A LONG AND CLOSE CONNECTION TO SUBVERSIVE GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES. INSTEAD OF CABLING FULL TEXT OF BIO INFORMATION GIVEN TO THE AMBASSADOR, WE WILL SUMMARIZE SALIENT POINTS OF OUR OWN EVALUATION:

4. THE MATERIAL ON GUSTAVO ROCA SHOWS CONCLUSIVELY THAT HE WAS A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND WAS CLOSELY LINKED TO TERRORIST GROUPS. GUSTAVO ROCA'S RECORD GOES BACK TO 1944 WHEN HE WAS FIRST INVESTIGATED FOR COMMUNIST CONNECTIONS. HE WAS A MEMBER OF THE POPULAR MOVEMENT FOR PEACE, A COMMUNIST ORGAN, IN THE LATE 1940'S AND WAS LISTED AS A MAIN LEADER OF THE ARGENTINE COUUMNIST PARTY OF CORDOBA IN 1955. IN 1957 HE WAS ARRESTED FOR SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES. IN 1970, ROCA REPORTEDLY WAS A MEMBER OF THE REVOLUTIONARY WORKER'S PARTY (PRT), THE TROTSKYITE "POLITICAL ARM" OF THE ERP. BY 1972 HE WAS REPORTED TO BE A LEADER OF THE AUGUST 22 SPLINTER FACTION OF THE ERP, AND DIRECTOR OF ITS PUBLICATION "LIBERATION." HE APPARENTLY HANDLED ERP FUNDS, INCLUDING THE "LAUNDERING" OF SOME $14 MILLION IN RANSOM FOR ESSO DIRECTOR VICTOR SAMUELSON IN 1974. ROCA TRAVELED FREQUENTLY TO CUBA, MOST RECENTLY IN 1972 WHEN HE REPORTEDLY COORDINATED THE ESCAPE TO CUBA OF ERP LEADERS AFTER THE TRELEW BREAK FROM RAWSON PRISON THAT YEAR.

5. THE INFORMATION ON GARZON MACEDA IDENTIFIES HIM WITH THE COMMUNIST PARTY (PCA) AND WITH LEFT-WING SUBVERSIVE GROUPS. GARZON MACEDA WAS REPORTEDLY EXPELLED FROM THE SOCIALIST PARTY IN 1959 FOR HIS TROTSKYITE VIEWS. HE WAS ARRESTED AND JAILED
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FOR CRIMES AGAINST "NATIONAL SECURITY" IN 1970. A LAWYER, HE SHARED A LAW OFFICE WITH GUSTAVO ROCA FOR MANY HEARS IN CORDOBA, WHERE HE ALSO WAS PROMINENT FOR DEFENDING LEFT-WING EXTREMISTS. LIKE ROCA, GARZON MACEDA HAS BEEN REPORTED TO BE A MEMBER OF THE PRT (THE POLITICAL ARM OF THE ERP).

6. THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT ISSUED ARREST WARRANTS FOR BOTH GUSTAVO ROCA AND GARZON MACEDA WHEN IT TOOK OVER IN MARCH. APPARENTLY BOTH MEN WERE IN HIDING IN ARGENTINE UNTIL EARLY SEPTEMBER WHEN THEY LEFT CLANDESTINELY FOR EUROPE. ARGENTINE AUTHORITIES CLAIM THEY WERE IN CONTACT WITH THE REVOLUTIONARY COORDINATING JUNTA (JCR) WHILE IN EUROPE.

7. BOTH MEN HAVE BEEN WELL KNOWN FOR THEIR EXTREME LEFT-WING SYMPATHIES AND ACTIVITIES LONG BEFORE THE HEARINGS AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL OPINION IN GENERAL REGARDS THEM AS COMMITTED, MILITANT MARXIST EXTREMISTS WITH CLOSE TIES TO THE ERP. THE PRESS HERE HAS PARTICULARLY CRITICIZED THE SUBCOMMITTEE'S SELECTION OF WITNESSES AS IRRESPONSIBLE AND BIASED AS THESE (REFTEL F). ROBERT COX OF THE BA HERALD, A COURAGEOUS EXPONENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN ARGENTINA, FOR EXAMPLE, ON OCTOBER 9 DES-CRIBED ROCA AS THE EDITOR OF A "SCURRILLOUS MAGAZINE WHICH JUBILANTLY REPORTED ASSASSINATIONS" AND GARZON MACEDA AS "ANOTHER APOSTLE OF VIOLENCE." WITH WITNESSES LIKE THESE, COX ADDS, "IT'S NOT DIFFICULT TO SEE WHY 'HUMAN RIGHTS' CRUSADERS HAVE GOTTEN THEMSELVES SUCH A BAD NAME."

8. GARZON MACEDA'S BROTHER FELIX, A TEACHER IN CORDOBA, ISSUED A STATEMENT OCTOBER 6 REPUDIATING HIS BROTHER'S TESTIMONY AND DISASSOCIATING HIMSELF FROM HIS BROTHER'S IDEOLOGY AND POLITICS.

9. ON BALANCE, ARGENTINE GOVERNMENTAL AND MODERATE PUBLIC OPINION HAS BEEN DEEPLY CONCERNED AND DISTRESSED OVER WHAT APPEARED TO BE BLATANTLY BIASED AND NON-OBJECTIVE TESTIMONY PRESENTED BY ARGENTINE WITNESSES CALLED BY COMMITTEE. THIS HAS MADE MORE DIFFICULT OUR TASK OF CONVINCING GOA THAT HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERN IN U. S. IS NOT SIMPLY MARXIST PLOT TO DISCREDIT GOVERNMENT. RECOMMEND THAT DEPARTMENT ENCOURAGE FRASER SUB-COMMITTEE TO CALL A FEW ARGENTINES WHO, WHILE DEEPLY COMMITTED TO DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS, ARE NOT SO IDENTIFIED WITH RADICAL
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LEFT AS TO LACK ALL CREDIBILITY AS WITNESSES.
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